100 per cent of the State both by area and population as against the national coverage of 91.42% by area and 99.13% by population. On Doordarshan side, Doordarshan Kendras in Bihar are equal to or more than those in 26 States/UTs. In 9 States/UTs, number of DDK are more than that in Bihar.

(b) There is no scheme to set up any new Doordarshan Kendra in Bihar. DDK, Patna has been made fully digital and DDK, Muzaffarpur partially digital. Additional equipment and facilities are envisaged to be provided during the 10th Plan for these to Kendras.

(c) and (d) Two Doordarshan Kendras and 42 TV (HPTs/LPTs/ VLPTs) transmitters are functioning in Bihar. TV coverage is estimated to be available to about 93.4% population of Bihar. For further expansion, LPT Saharsa is under replacement by HPT. Multi Channel TV coverage through Doordarshan's free to air DAH service "DD Direct Plus" is available in the entire country including Bihar.

Competition with new channels

1706. SHRI GIREESH KUMAR SANGHI: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have overcome the competition from new channels in terms of coverage in cities;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, in what manner his Ministry would overcome such a competition?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI PRIYARANJAN DASMUNSI): (a) to (c) Prasar Bharati have informed that in terms of coverage, Doordarshan's DD 1 and DD News Channels continue to be at the top of all the TV Channels watched in the country.

PM's assurance to INS

1707. SHRI GIREESH KUMAR SANGHI: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have undertaken any analysis about the assurance given by PM to INS in solving major newspapers industries issues; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI PRIYARANJAN DASMUNSI): (a) No formal assurance has been given by the Prime Minister to INS in solving major newspapers industries issues.

(b) Does not arise.

Pension scheme for NRIs

1708. SHRI THENNALA G. BALAKRISHNA PILLAI: Will the Minister of OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have any proposal for any type of pension scheme for NRIs; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS (SHRI VAYALAR RAVI): (a) No Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

Proposal for E-Governance initiatives in rural areas

1709. SHRI C. PERUMAL: Will the Minister of PANCHAYATI RAJ be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any proposal with Government to promote e-governance 31 initiatives in rural parts of the country

(b) if so, how far would it be helpful to farmers to sell their produce at best possible rates; and

(c) the time-frame for the completion of the project with financial allocation, State-wise?

THE MINISTER OF PANCHAYATI RAJ (SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR): (a) and (b) The Ministry of Panchayati Raj is preparing a mission mode project for e-Governance at the Gram Panchayat level under the National e-Governance plan. It is envisaged that this will enable all Panchayats in the country to progressively obtain the benefits of Information Technology in implementing e-Governance solutions with reference to identified services delivered at the Panchayat level.